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*The Punjab*  
**BELONGS TO THE SIKHS**

BY  
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FOREWARD BY  
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**The  
Punjab  
Belongs  
To The  
Sikhs**

And thirdly, that the empire of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was brought to an end by gross injustice and in a very high handed way, because by the treaty of Bharowal, the Punjab had become a British protectorate and Maharaja Duleep Singh a ward of the British Government. Hence it was the duty of the British Government to maintain order in the State. By putting down the rebellion of Diwan Mulraj and S. Charhat Singh they simply did their duty and nothing more. This did not give them any justification for the annexation of the Punjab. Thus whatever was done was illegal and unjust and this injustice was done not to an individual but to the whole Sikh Nation.



## INTRODUCTION

These pages are an attempt to examine in the first place the historical version regarding the deposition of Maharaja Duleep Singh, the causes that led to the so-called Second Sikh War, and Lord Dalhousie's annexation policy in the Punjab in the light of true facts and evidence regarding the same available now ; and secondly to put before the reader the events that took place during the period of the Board's Administration.

Most of the English Historians justify the deposition of Maharaja Duleep Singh on the ground that the Sikhs waged a fierce war against the English and in consequence of that war the Maharaja also could not be exempted from punishment—and was therefore deposed; but in arguing like this these historians overlook the point—which is of considerable importance—that at the time of his deposition the Maharaja was a minor and a ward of the British Government, and that the Punjab was a British Protectorate.

Their argument would have been most invulnerable had the Maharaja been an independent Ruler of an independent State, but such was not the case.

Moreover, the event, the so called Second Sikh War, was in reality a partial rising of a Section of the Maharaja's population.

Mr. Ludlow has the following sarcastic and humorous remarks on this transaction :—

“Duleep Singh was an infant; his minority was only to end in 1854. We were his declared Protectors. On our last advance into the country we had proclaimed (18th November 1848) that we came to punish the insurgents and to put down all “armed opposition to constituted authority.”

We fulfilled that pledge by annexing his whole country within six months. On the 29th of March 1849 the kingdom of the Punjab was declared to be at an end; the child, our protege, was pensioned off, all State property confiscated to the Company, the celebrated diamond—the Koh-i-Noor—surrendered to the Queen. In other words we protected our ward by taking his whole territory from him”.

“If it was right to annex the Punjab, it should have been after the First Sikh war ; but having once recognised and undertaken to protect Duleep Singh, it was mockery to punish him for the fault of his subjects, as between us and him, in putting down insurrection, we were simply fulfilling our duty towards him. No such action on the part of his subjects could give us any tithe against him. Fancy, if you can, a widow lady with house full of mutinous servants who turn out and attack the police. The Police

knock them on the head, walk into the house, and kindly valunteer to protect the mistress against any violence on their part. A quarrel again breaks out, and the inspector now politely informs the lady that her house and the estate on which it stands are no longer her own, but will be retained in fee simple by the police; that on turning out she will receive an annuity equal to about one and six pence in the pound of her rental, and that she must handover for the use of the Chief Commissioner the best diamond necklace. Is this an exaggerated version of our conduct towards that innocent boy Duleep Singh ?”

There is no doubt that injustice was done to the Maharaja, and I propose to discuss the same in the following pages.





## CHAPTER I

### SECOND SIKH WAR

The so called Second Sikh War, which had its beginning with the revolt of Mulraj (the Nizam of Multan) came to an end by the defeat of the Khalsa Army at Gujrat ; and the Punjab lay prostrate at the feet of the victor. What to do with the conquered Province was the imminent question before Lord Dalhousie. His own mind with regard to the Punjab had been made since long. He had decided at the outset of the hostilities to annex it at the successful termination of the rebellion. The official opinion in India too was also overwhelmingly in favour of this course. So, this being the case, Lord Dalhousie decided to annex the country which he believed he had conquered from the Sikhs. Accordingly on the 30th March 1849 from his Camp at Ferozepur he published a proclamation announcing the final replacement of the Khalsa by the British Raj, and declaring every inch of the Punjab annexed to the British dominions in India.

Thus the Punjab became a part of the Indian Empire.

The political advantages gained thereby were no doubt very great ; but from moral and legal standpoint this action of Lord Dalhousie was unfair, unjust, and

high-handed. In the succeeding pages I shall give my reason for holding this opinion,

### **Proclamation.**

Before I dwell on Lord Dalhousie's annexation policy, it appears to me most essential to put before the reader the proclamation which brought about this change of rulers in the Punjab, because this document contains some of the most important charges which Lord Dalhousie brings against the Maharaja's Government in order to justify the annexation.

It reads as follow:—

“For many years in the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh peace and friendship prevailed between the British Nation and the Sikhs.

When Ranjit Singh was dead and his wisdom no longer guided the Council of State, the Sirdars, and the Khalsa Army suddenly invaded the British territory without any cause.

Their Army was again and again defeated. They were driven with slaughter and in shame from the country they had invaded, and at the gates of Lahore Maharaja Duleep Singh tendered to the Governor General the submission of himself and his chiefs, and solicited the clemency of the British Government.

The Governor General extended the clemency of his Government to the State of Lahore. He gene-

rously spared the Kingdom, and the the Maharaja having been placed on the throne treaties of friendship were formed between the States.

The British have faithfully kept the word and have scrupulously observed every obligation which the treaties imposed upon them.

But the Sikh people and their Chiefs have on their part grossly and faithlessly violated the promises by which they were bound.

Of their annual tribute no portion whatever has at any time been paid, and large loans advanced to them by the Government of India have never been repaid.

The control of the British Government to which they voluntarily submitted has been resisted by arms.

Peace has been cast aside. British Officers have been murdered when acting for the State. Others engaged in the like employment have treacherously been thrown in captivity.

Finally, the army of the State and the whole Sikh nation, joined by many of the Sirdars in the Punjab and led by a member of the Regency itself, have risen in arms against us and have waged a fierce and bloody war for the proclaimed purpose of destroying the British and their power. The Government of India formerly declared that it desired on further conquest, and it proved by its acts the sincerity of the

profession. The Government of India have no desire for conquest now, but it is bound in its duty to provide fully for its security, and to guard the interest of those committed to its charge. To that end, and as the only sure mode of protecting the State from the perpetual recurrence of unprovoked and wasting wars, the Governor-General is compelled to resolve upon the entire subjugation of a people whom their own Government has long been unable to control, and whom (as events have now shown) no punishment can deter from violence, no acts of friendship conciliate to peace.

Wherefore the Governor General of India has declared and hereby proclaim the Kingdom of the Punjab is at an end ; and that all the territories of Maharaja Duleep Singh are now and henceforth a portion of the British Empire in India .....etc. etc."

This is the proclamation which announced the deposition of Maharaja Duleep Singh and put an end to his sovereignty in the Punjab. In drawing up this document Lord Dalhousie has given a rare proof of his ability, as statesman. He very cleverly tries to display the Sikhs before the world as the wanton aggressors, in order to show thereby that the deposition of the Maharaja was the result of the two aggressive Sikh wars, and thus to justify his annexation of the Punjab.

But the truth is far from this. It were the English

who wanted war in 1845, and not the Sikhs. The appointment of Lord Hardinge, the Soldier Statesman, as the Governor General of India in 1844, the replacement of Colonel Richmond by Major Broadfoot at the Agency of Ludhiana, and the increase in the British troops on the Sikh Frontier clearly affirm this view. But Lord Dalhousie overlooking all these facts says in the proclamation that, "the Khalsa army without provocation and without cause suddenly invaded. The British territory". Just the reverse of this is the truth. The Sikhs never invaded the British territory in the true sense. On the contrary they had a number of grievances against the British Government on this point as recorded by Sir George Campbell in the following terms.

"It is recorded in the annals of history that the Sikh army invaded the British territory in pursuance of a determination to attack us; and most people will be very much surprised to hear that they did nothing of the kind. They made no attack on our outlying cantonments, nor set foot on our territory. What they did so was to cross the river and entrench themselves in their own territory".

This, taken as it is, was no doubt a breach of treaty; but, as Captain Cunningham writes in his book, the Sikhs honestly believed that they were acting in good faith for their own defence, and that they were thereby not violating the treaty.

Moreover, if the British Government had the right in spite of the treaty to amass troops to the number of

75,000 on the Sikh Frontier, had the Sikhs no such right to take any counterstep? In reality this step of the Sikhs was only a counter measure and no act of aggression. Furthermore, the Lahore Durbar had a number of grievances against the British Government at this time. In April 1845, the Durbar sent one Lal Singh Adaluttee to Kote Kapoora (it was a Sikh possession), with an escort of about two hundred irregulars, to assert the Durbar's authority there. They crossed the river and proceeded only a few miles to their first encampment at a place called "Talwandee" in Lahore territory. Broadfoot happened to be in camp not far off, and a British European regiment was close by on the March to Ferozepur. He very roughly and peremptorily ordered the Sikh party back over the river. Lal Singh not willing to risk a collision obeyed, returned to the river, and embarked his men; but Broadfoot, not satisfied with this, followed them in person and finding the last boat containing the leader on the point of shoving off insisted on capturing them. At last one shot was fired to bring them to shore; and most accounts say that one man was killed. At any rate the Sikh leaders were captured and detained. The shot then fired has been described as the first in the Sikh war.

The affair gave rise to great irritation; and still more irritation was caused by dispute about "Anandpur Makuwal". Some disturbance took place there in 1845: Broadfoot insisted on interfering and on account of the religious questions involved, the affair caused much excitement.

At this time the Lahore Durbar formulated all their

grievances against the British Government in a sort of appeal and presented it to the Governor General; but Lord Hardinge turned a deaf ear to it, and no reply was given to the Durbar in return.

This was the state of affairs just before the First Sikh War, and in the presence of such facts it is hardly possible to accuse the Sikhs of aggression.

By this time they had become too weak, and a weak nation cannot afford to take the offensive. It is the strong man who always attacks first. Human nature is everywhere the same, and in the case of the Sikhs it could not be otherwise.

Thus the charge of aggression which Lord Dalhousie brings against the Sikhs, falls to pieces before the logic of facts.

### **Virtue, A Necessity.**

Lord Dalhousie in his anxiety to justify his action with regard to the Punjab, again overlooks certain facts.

In the Proclamation he says that "the Maharaja solicited the clemency of the British Government. The Governor General extended the clemency of his Government to the State of Lahore", and "he generously spared the Kingdom". But clemency of which he boasts so much was no clemency at all. It was the inability of the Government which deterred Lord Hardinge from annexing the Punjab at the end of the First Sikh war, and no feeling of compunction for the Maharaja. Had the Governor



General been in a position to subvert the Maharaja's Kingdom, he would have done so without the least hesitation, and no clemency would have been shown to Duleep Singh. His moderation was undoubtedly inspired by his position. Four pitched battles had reduced his European troops to three thousand men. Gulab Singh was anxious to be a friend, and strong enough to be an enemy.

On this subject William Edwards writes 2 :

“Annexation of the country with the force at our disposal was perfectly out of question, had it been in other respects politic, or desirable. This, in Lord Hardinge's opinion, could not be, as the Punjab could never, he felt assured, repay the cost of its administration, and that of the large force which would be required to garrison it, and which being no longer available for the protection of our territory would have to be replaced by fresh masses of troops.”

Thus the political and financial considerations rendered it impossible for Lord Hardinge to annex the whole of the Punjab after the First Sikh war; and to make a virtue of necessity the Governor General showed his magnanimity by leaving Duleep Singh as a Ruler of a portion of the Punjab.

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1. Marquess of Dalhousie's Administration of British India, Vol. I, page 47, footnote.

2. Papers relating to the Punjab 1849, Pp 105, and 106.

However, this is only a digression to show the reader how Lord Dalhousie distorted the facts.

In the proclamation he accused the Sikh people of grossly and faithlessly violating the treaties; of the non-payment of the subsidy and the debts which they owed to the British Government; and, lastly, that they rose in arms against the British Government and waged a fierce and bloody war for the proclaimed purpose of destroying the British and their power.

But these are not all the charges he brought against the State of Lahore.

In order to justify the deposition of Duleep Singh he prepared a long list of indictments against the Maharaja's Government in his dispatch dated the seventh of April to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors. In this paper, which is the best specimen of rhetoric art of which Lord Dalhousie was a past-master, he attempted to vindicate his policy with regard to the Punjab; but it remains to be seen how far he succeeded in his endeavours.

To make a strong case in defence of annexation he brings into display all the tricks of state-craft, distorts certain points, grossly misrepresents others; and wholly ignores one point that the British Government had taken responsibility for the "maintenance and protection" of the Lahore State by the treaty of Bharowal, dated the 16th of December 1846.

This contract made between the Lahore Durbar and the British Government was "to terminate on His

Highness attaining the full age of sixteen years, or on the 4th of September 1854.”<sup>1</sup>

In order to maintain the administration of the Lahore State during the minority of the Maharaja, the Governor General was furnished with the highest power, and was “at liberty to occupy with British soldiers such positions as he may think fit for the security of the capital, for the protection of the Maharaja’s person, and the preservation of the peace of the country”.<sup>2</sup>

**Resident, the virtual head of  
the Maharaja’s Government.**

The British Resident was appointed as the head of the Maharaja’s Government with “full authority to direct and control all the matters in every department of the State”.<sup>3</sup>

He enjoyed “unlimited powers”<sup>4</sup>—and was subjected to no one else excepting the Governor General.

This was the real state of affairs at the time when Lord Dalhousie deposed the innocent prince.

In order to achieve his end he not only overlooks but in a way denies the very existence of these facts when

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<sup>1</sup> Papers, Articles of Agreement with the Lahore Durbar 1847, page 49.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid page 50.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid page 50.

<sup>4</sup> Punjab Papers 1849, Pp 35 & 48

he declares in his despatches that the British Government "maintained the Government of the State in the Council of Regency"<sup>1</sup> meaning thereby to show that the real Government of the State was vested in the Council of Regency, and that the Resident was only an agent of Governor General at Lahore, and that he had nothing to do with the Maharaja's Government. Really a wonderful device to throw dust in the eyes of the world at large !

The true fact is that the Council of Regency was only one part of the Lahore Government, of which the Resident was the head and the motive force.

A few extracts from Lord Harding's despatch dated the 21st of December 1847 to the Secret Committee of the Directors have a clear bearing on this point. In this despatch he thus describes the new arrangement made to carry on the Maharaja's Government.

"A Council of Regency, composed of leading Chiefs will act under the control and guidance of the British Resident.

The powers of the Resident extend over every department, and to any extent."<sup>2</sup>

These terms give the British Resident unlimited authority in all matters of internal administration, and external relations, during the Maharaja's minority; and the Governor-General himself reminds the Resident in

1. Punjab Papers 1849, page 659.

2. Papers, Articles of Agreement with the Lahore Durbar P. 24.

a letter dated the 3rd of July 1847 that the treaty of Bharowal \*gives to the Government of India, represented at Lahore by its Resident, full powers to direct and control all matters in every department of the State. It is politic that the Resident should carry the native Council with him, the member of which are, however, entirely under his control and guidance, He can change them and appoint others; and in military affairs his power is as unlimited as in the civil administration. He can withdraw the Sikh Garrison, replacing them by British troops in any and every part of the Punjab''. All these extracts indicate that the young Maharaja was the ward of the British Government and that the Resident was the virtual head of his Government which had been constituted by the treaty of Bharowal to carry on the administration of the State during the minority of Duleep Singh.

But Lord Dalhousie totally ignores these facts. In doing so his motive is quite clear- He wants to show that the young Prince was the independent ruler of an independent State at the commencement of the Multan rebellion and he was justly deposed in consequence of war waged by his subjects against the British Government

Had such been the case there would have been no cause for complaint against his action; but under the existing circumstances his policy in regard to the Punjab could be anything but just.

\*Papers relating to the Punjab 1849, page 18,

## **Attempt to separate the Resident from the Lahore Durbar**

One of the many charges which Lord Dalhousie put down against the Sikhs in his despatch is that whereas "they had bound themselves to submit to the full authority of the British Resident directing and controlling all matters in every department of the State, the Government of Lahore, in reply to the orders of the Resident, neither punished the offender, nor gave explanation for the offence, but declared that their troops were not to be depended upon."\*

This attempt to separate the Resident from the Government of Lahore and to use the latter term as synonymous with the Sikhs is quite unwarrantable. The Resident was the virtual head of the Maharaja's Government at the time when the news of the murder of the two English officers at Multan came to Lahore; he did not transfer his authority to the Durbar after that event either but on the contrary throughout the rebellion kept holding that position.

His power was unlimited. He could withdraw Sikh troops replacing them by the British soldiers in any and every part of the Punjab. The Members of the Council of Regency were simply tools in his hands: so if anybody is to be blamed for not punishing the "offender" it should be the Resident, and none else, as he had been the virtual head of the Lahore Government all the while.

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\*Papers relating to the Punjab, page 660

Before I pass on to the other items of indictment which Lord Dalhousie brings against the Lahore State it appears to me necessary to describe briefly those circumstances that ultimately brought about the general Sikh rising. Four causes mainly contributed to stimulate it: the criminal delay on the part of the British Government to crush the outbreak at Multan; the exile of Maharani Jindan Kaur from the Punjab; the refusal of the Resident to fix the date of the Maharaja's marriage; and lastly the treatment given to Sardar Charhat Singh.

The fact that the Multan rebellion was not put down in its very early stages was responsible for the continuance of suspicion against Sardar Charhat Singh who whether he was, or was not, a leader of the supposed Sikh conspiracy was forced by the treatment accorded to him by Abbot to take up arms. On the 29th of April Mulraj raised the standard of revolt at Multan, and on the 24th the news reached Lahore. Thereupon the Resident called together the Members of the Council of Regency and told them in very plain terms that they must put down the rising at Multan with their own resources; that "if it should be necessary to move a British Soldier the affair would be a serious one for the Durbar."\*

The Chiefs discussed the whole matter among themselves, and then informed the Resident that without the help of the British troops they were unable to carry out operations against Multan as the regular Army of the

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\*Papers relating to the Punjab page, 138.

State would not act against Mulraj. They requested the Resident to let the Sikh troops remain in the position which they were occupying and to order the British Regiments to march to Multan.

The Resident refused to act on this advice. I do not see any wisdom in this refusal of the Resident, since the British troops present at Lahore were maintained for this very purpose by the Lahore State.

Had the Resident acted upon the counsel of the Chiefs and sent the troops to Multan, the rebellion would have been crushed without much difficulty. There would have been no general conflagration later on, and consequently the Maharaja would not have been deposed.

Lord Dalhousie when informed by the Resident of the line of action he had taken in this case, not only approved of his decision, but ordered him not to send a single British soldier to Multan till the beginning of the cold weather. Everyone condemns this action of Lord Dalhousie ; even those historians, who think it a sin to say anything against him, do not approve of this measure of the Governor General. The delay which seemed to him wise caused only fresh troubles in the Punjab, and afforded to the Sikhs new temptations. Had the Resident sent his forces, it would have been easy to crush the rebellion without much difficulty ; and the revolt at Hazara would not have occurred. Raja Sher Singh then would probably have remained true to the British Government.

Lord Dalhousie gives a very flimsy reason for adopting



this course. He says that the outbreak at Multan took place in the hot weather ; and that it being the hottest place in India, the operations there could not have been conducted without additional losses to the troops. A very strange plea !

If the Governor General's predecessors had also acted like him, it is obvious that the English would not have conquered an inch of Indian soil.

Lord Dalhousie perhaps did not know that most of the battles fought and won by the English in India were fought in the hot weather.

The battle of Plassey took place on the 23rd of June; the siege of Seringapatam was conducted in the hottest month of the year, and a little later when the Mutiny broke out, the operations against the sepoys were carried on with great vigour and energy during the hot season. If Lord Canning had also followed this policy he would have lost the Indian Empire.

Thus Lord Dalhousie's plea of hot weather cannot stand before reason.

It has been said by more than one writer that he purposely did not take any measures against Mulraj, because he did not like to nip the evil in the bud. He wished in his heart of hearts that it should develope into something formidable so that he might get an excuse for the annexation of the country.

## **Banishment of Maharani Jindan Kaur**

In the beginning of May 1848 a plot hatched against the Resident and his European agents was brought to the notice of Sir Frederick Currie by a native officer. He took prompt action, and brought the plotters to justice. It is said that the name of the Maharanee was also implicated in the conspiracy, but she stoutly denied to have anything to do with it, and asked the Resident to let her clear her position.

He refused to comply with her request, because he was aware that a clear proof of her being involved was not obtainable ; and if put upon her trial she might escape punishment he wanted to inflict upon her. He therefore peremptorily ordered that the Maharanee should be banished from the Punjab. The Members of the Council of Regency questioned the expediency of such a measure ; but quite regardless of what they said he carried on his own policy, and appointed Nuruddin and two British Officers to accompany her to Benares.

This action of his in regard to the Maharanee exasperated the Sikhs, because she, inspite of all her shortcomings, was still looked upon by them as their mother.

Her banishment was regarded by all those who were connected with Ranjit Singh's kingdom at once as a notional insult, and as a preliminary step to the final deposition of Maharaja Dulceep Singh and the annexation of his State.

The Resident had been warned before hand by the Chiefs that the persecution of the Maharanee would

"Yesterday evening Raja Sher Singh Attariwala begged me to grant him a private interview at which he laid before me the wishes of his father Sardar Charhat Singh. If it is not your intention that the nuptial of the Maharaja should be celebrated sometime within the next twelve months, the Sirdar would wish to be allowed to lay aside the duties of his Hazara Government, and proceed on pilgrimage for two years. If, on the contrary, the marriage is to take place this year, the Sirdar would suggest that, with your sanction, the Durbar should appoint astrologers on the part of the Maharaja to fix an auspicious month and day in conjunction with other astrologers on the part of the bride.

The above is the substance of the Raja's conversation, and he earnestly requested me to procure him an answer from you within ten days.

The request seems to be strange at the present moment. The secret motives of men are difficult to divine; but there can be no question that an opinion has gone very prevalently abroad, and has been carefully disseminated that the British meditate declaring the Punjab forfeited by the recent troubles and misconduct of the troops; and whether Attariwala family have any doubts, or not, upon this point themselves, it would, I think, be a wise and timely-measure to give such public assurance of British good faith and intention to adhere to the treaty as would be involved in authoritative preparations for providing the young Maharaja with a queen—it would no doubt settle men's minds greatly".\*

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\* Papers relating to the Punjab, pages 270-273.

The Resident returned a very stiff official reply to this application carefully avoiding any such "assurance", public or private, as Raja Sher Singh wanted to elicit.

He remarked that "all the ceremonies for affiancing being complete, it would in common usage rest with the family of the bride to determine the time when the actual ceremony of marriage should take Place",<sup>1</sup> but that "ofcourse, with reference to the position of the Maharaja, nothing can be done in this case without the convenience and approbation of the Residency". He said "he will confidentially consult the members of the Durbar now at Lahore on the subject of the time at which the marriage should be celebrated; and Raja Sher Singh may be assured that the British Government will only interfere to secure that all is done which may be best calculated to promote the honour and happiness of the Maharaja, and of the bride and her family".

The ominous reply of the Resident was conveyed to Raja Sher Singh by Major Edwards; and there is no doubt that such an answer would have fully convinced the Raja and his father, who had already some doubts as to the sincerity of the British Government's intentions, that the feelings of the British Authorities were not friendly towards the Maharaja, that they would hold the young Maharaja responsible for the outrages committed at Multan; and that his kingdom would be subverted with the actual suppression of the revolt.

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1. Papers relating to the Punjab pages 270-273.

It is no wonder that their heads would have been filled with wild ideas and rash schemes to save their country and the Maharaja from utter destruction.

Furthermore by this time Sirdar Charhat Singh's own personal difficulties were coming to a head; and he was himself falling into sore straits.

He was the Nazim of Hazara Province inhabited by armed Muhammedans, chiefly peasants, who were bitterly hostile to the Sikhs. It was not an easy job to keep these men under control. Captain Abbott, who was one of the assistants of the Resident, was appointed to aid and advise Sirdar Charhat Singh in the execution of his duties. Just after the outbreak at Multan, this officer took up his abode some thirty five miles away from the Nazim's residence, because he became impressed with the belief that Sirdar Charhat Singh was at the head of a conspiracy for the expulsion of the English from the Punjab ; and stopped all personal communication with him. \*

Thus, from this time onward they were not on good terms, and the constant suspicion with which Captain Abbott regarded Sirdar Charhat Singh "was the real cause that not un-naturally estranged that chief from him". \*

In the first week of August 1848 Captain Abbott without any previous warning or communication with the Nazim of Hazara, and without informing the

\*Papers relating to the Punjab 1849, page 279.

Resident beforehand, assembled a larger number of Muhammedans, over whom he had obtained a great influence, and closed the passes on the road to Lahore. On the 6th of August these rebels—rebels they were because they had taken up arms against the constituted authority of the country—surrounded the town of Haripur, where Sirdar Charhat Singh was living.

Sirdar Charhat Singh, purely as a measure of defence, ordered his troops that were stationed at Haripur, to encamp at the plain under the guns of the Fort.

Colonel Canora, an American serving under the Sikh Government for some years, refused to obey the orders, and not only that but loaded two of his guns with charges of grape, and took his stand between them and said that he would fire upon the first man who came near him.

Thereupon two companies of the Sikh Infantry were ordered by the Nazim to take possession of the guns. Colonel Canora commanded one of his Havildars to fire upon the advancing Sikh soldiers. The Havildar refused to obey, and thereupon he cut down the native officer on the spot with his sword and applied match to one of the guns himself, but it was ineffective.

In the meanwhile he was struck down by musket shots of the two Infantry soldiers, but before he died, it is said, he killed two Sikh Officers with his double barrelled pistol. This incident left no alternative to Sirdar Charhat Singh but to rebel, because he felt that the event had sufficiently compromised his position,

and as he had no hope of justice from the Resident, he took the most desperate step, and raised the standard of revolt in Hazara.

In fact this rising of the Nazim of Hazara was originally an insurrection of the Muhammedan peasantry with the object of exterminating the Sikh troops, and the Governor. It is believed that they were instigated by Captain Abbott. The following few extracts from his own letter to the Resident prove this fact.

“I have ordered out the armed peasantry and will do my best to destroy the Sikh Army,”

Again he says “I assembled the Chiefs of Hazara, explained to them what had happened, and called upon them by the memory of their murdered parents, friends, and relatives to rise and aid me in destroying the Sikh forces in detail. I issued Parwanas to this effect throughout the land, and marched to a strong position.”

It appears, therefore, that the infirm Sirdar was goaded by the Resident's agent (Captain Abbott) to take up arms against the British Authorities, which he certainly would not have done, had his own life not been threatened.

He took this measure as a last resort. He had to lose all and gain nothing by it. Everything that makes life worth living, he already enjoyed; and the rebellion, even if successful, would not have materially benefited him.

After Sirdar Charhat Singh's revolt, the desertion of the British cause by Raja Sher Singh was only a question of time. He being the son of the Sirdar could not afford to stand by and see his father disgraced.

On the 14th of September 1848 he also threw in his lot with his father. This action of Raja Sher Singh was not the result of any deep-rooted conspiracy as asserted by Captain Abbott and others; but, on the contrary it was an impulsive measure taken in the heat of the moment, and in a fit of desperation. Major Edwards bears testimony to this, and the facts also prove the same. He had his share in the task of suppressing the rebellion of Dewan Mulraj with the greatest zeal and was so determined up to the end of August 1848 that he had been nicknamed "Sheikh Singh", and was even mentioned as a Mussalman by the Sikh soldiers of his Army.

A plot was engineered to put him to death by poison, but it was detected, and consequently the ring-leader, a Sikh, Soojan Singh, by name, was hanged.

This act of the Raja made him very unpopular with his troops.

Besides this, the suspicions of Mulraj in the Raja's good faith prove the same fact that the desertion of Raja Sher Singh was not the result of any deep-rooted conspiracy but was a natural consequence of his father's disaffection.

However, thus came about the rising of Sirdar Charhat Singh and Raja Sher Singh, and the above facts are stated to be the true circumstances that greatly contributed to bring it about.



The revolt, which was in fact an appeal to arms by an old infirm Sirdar in self-defence is exaggerated by Lord Dalhousie and the English Historians into a fierce Sikh war; and in consequence of it the Maharaja was deposed and the Punjab was annexed. The English historians in order to prove their theory of the Second Sikh war interconnect the Multan rebellion and the Hazara revolt and present it in such a way before the reader that he thinks that these two events took place simultaneously one after the other, and that the Multan rebellion was a signal for the general Sikh rising in the Punjab against the English; but this is not based on facts. The outbreak at Multan took place on the 20th of April 1848 and it was a revolt of an officer of the Durbar against the Maharaja's Government, whereas the rebellion of Sirdar Charhat Singh and Raja Sher Singh was originally the outcome of the insurrection of the Muhammedan Peasantry of Hazara which had been instigated and promoted by Captain Abbott.

Thus the two events were quite distinct from one another; and it is a mistake to identify them with each other. They had nothing in common; the leaders of the two revolts themselves never made a common cause, and did not substantially help each other throughout this period—rather on the contrary Raja Sher Singh, before he espoused the cause of his father, had been fighting at Multan against Dewan Mulraj. It so appears that the event which is described as the Second Sikh War was only a partial rising of the Sikh soldiery. The Maharaja's Government was in no way connected with it; and it was never at war during all this period from the 20th of

April 1848 to the 24th of March 1849, on which date the Maharaja was deposed.

The following facts will bring home to the reader the force of this argument.

In the first place the Resident, all this while, remained in Lahore; secondly, he never lost the custody of the Maharaja's person during all this period for a single minute; thirdly, his authority as the Chief Ruler of the Punjab was never suspended; the capital was never in a state of disturbance—hence the Government of the Lahore State exactly as the Governor General had chosen to organise it, including the Council, was unaltered to the last. Six Councillors Faqir Nuruddin, Shamsheer Singh Sindhanwalia, Raja Dina Nath, Bhai Nadhan Singh, Raja Tej Singh were perfectly blameless in their public conduct.

And lastly, the proclamation, issued on the 18th, of November 1848, most emphatically supports this statement. This proclamation announces to the "loyal subjects of the Maharaja" and the Sikh Soliders "who may have been led away by the false statements of the evil disposed" that "the army" of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gough, "has entered the Lahore territories not as an enemy to the constituted government, but to restore order and obedience".

The above facts thus very clearly indicate that during this period of eleven months, that is, from April 1848 to March 1849, the British Government and the Lahore State were never at war with one another.

No doubt there were two rebellions going on in the Punjab during this period, which had caused a good deal of disturbance in the country; but the Maharaja's Government was in no way connected with them, because the Resident was the head of the Government of the Maharaja's State, and everybody knows that the Resident remained faithful to the British Government to the very last minute. The British troops commanded by Lord Gough were marched into the Punjab in the first week of November; and their passage through the country was never disputed by the Maharaja's Government.

This fact also shows that the two Governments had no quarrel between themselves. The rebellion of Multan was crushed on the 22nd of January 1849, and Raja Sher Singh's forces were defeated on the 21st of February 1849. Peace was thus restored in the country.

But by suppressing the rebellion Lord Dalhousie did not acquire any right—as is claimed by him—to subvert the Maharaja's kingdom, because up to the very last day of his reign Duleep Singh had been the ward of the British Government, which had taken upon itself 'the maintenance of the administration and the protection of the Maharaja's person during his minority.'

Thus by quelling the rebellion the British Government fulfilled its treaty obligations to which it had bound itself: so Lord Dalhousie's claim that "the British Government had acquired an absolute and undoubted right to dispose of the Punjab which it had conquered" appears quite preposterous in the face of this evidence, and the subversion of the Maharaja's kingdom as wholly

unfair and unjust. As a matter of fact he could not depose the Maharaja and annex the Punjab to British India but might is right—weaker must go to the wall. These were the real circumstances under which the deposition of the Maharaja was brought about.

Lord Dalhousie in his despatch dated the 7th of April to the Secret Committee of the Directors makes statements which are thought to be exaggerated. He says that “the whole body of the nation—army and population—have deliberately and unprovoked again made war upon us”\*, and then in another passage of the same despatch he himself contradicts the above statement by saying that “the Sikh people form comparatively a small portion of the population of the Punjab”, and that “a large proportion of the inhabitants and especially the Muhammedans played no part in the recent disturbance and had no sympathy with the rebels”‡.

Moreover, at the same time Lord Dalhousie’s wholesale impeachment of the Sikh nation is not true to facts. There were only thirteen thousand Sikhs who fought under Sher Singh at Gujrat against the English, whereas the Sikh population of the Lahore State was in no way less than a million souls.

Many Sirdars with their relations and dependants took no part in the rebellion, and most of them were Sikhs. Very few were Hindus or Muhammedans.

\*Papers relating to the Punjab page, 660.

‡ Ibid 664.

Six out of eight members of the Council of Regency remained faithful to the British Authorities, and among them was Bhai Nadhan Singh, the head of the Sikh religion. In another passage of the despatch Lord Dalhousie writes thus; —

“ It is shameful that of the Sirdars of the State properly so called, who signed the treaties, the greater portion have been involved in those hostilities against us”,\*.

This is another exaggerated statement because out of sixteen Sirdars who signed the treaty of Bharowal only five participated in the rebellion while the rest remained true to the British cause.

Lord Dalhousie's complaint that the Lahore State did not give any substantial help to the British Government in the suppression of the rebellion is also not just, because General Cartlandt with a regular regiment and artillery of the Durbar and Sheikh Emam-uddin was helping Major Edwards most zealously throughout the siege of Multan. Also, the Sikh troops under the command of two loyal Sirdars, Miser Sahib Dayal and Dewan Jowahir mal, did good service up to the end of the campaign; and at the same time twenty thousand subjects of the Lahore State enrolled in its service, fought on the side of the British Government, and assisted in quelling the rebellion.

\* Papers relating to the Punjab, page 660.

One of the charges, which Lord Dalhousie brings against the Maharaja's Government, is that "in return of the aid of the British troops it bound itself to pay to the British Government a subsidy of twenty-two lacs per annum" <sup>1</sup>; but "that from the day when the treaty was signed to the 7th of April 1849 not a rupee had ever been paid". Loans advanced by the British Government to enable the Durbar to discharge the disbanded troops had never been repaid". Even this accusation of non-payment is not true. The Resident in his letter dated 23rd of February 1848 reports to the Governor General as follows ;—

"The Durbar have paid into this treasury gold to the value of rupees 13, 56,837. By this payment they have reduced their debt to the British Government from upwards of forty lacs of rupees to less than twenty two." <sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the temporary failure of the Lahore State to meet its pecuniary liabilities was not wilful or faithless but that it was not in a position to pay back its debts for some time. It was a mere matter of accounts, and the State, if its life had not been cut short, would have paid back in due course its loans from the British Government.

The above quoted fact clearly shows that the Governor General totally fails to prove any violation of the treaty against the Lahore State.

1 Papers relating to the Punjab, 1849, pages 110, 111.

2 Papers relating to the Punjab 1849, 668.

One of the arguments which he forwards in favour of the annexation of the Punjab is that "when the Khalsa Army, in 1845, invaded the British territory the Maharaja was not held to be free from responsibility. On the contrary the Government of India confiscated to itself the richest provinces of the Maharaja's kingdom.

"If the Maharaja was not exempted from responsibility on the plea of his tender years at the age of eight, he cannot on that plea be entitled to exemption from a like responsibility now that he is three years elder".<sup>1</sup>

It is strange that no difference was observed between 1845 and 1848. In 1845 the Maharaja was the independent ruler of an independent State, which the British Government had conquered, but in 1848-49 he was the ward of the Government of India, and the real ruler of the State was the Resident subject to the instructions of the Governor General. Had there been no Bharowal treaty in existence, the Maharaja would have been held responsible for the misconduct of his people ; but in the presence of this treaty he was entirely exempted from responsibility, because all responsibility had been assumed by the British Government. From the 16th of December 1846, the day on which the treaty of Bharowal was signed, to the 29th of March 1849, the date on which Maharaja Duleep Singh was finally deposed and the Punjab became a part of the Indian Empire, the Government of the Lahore State was strictly subservient to the authority of the Resident.

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<sup>1</sup> Papers relating to the Punjab 1849, page 668.

If the Government of the Lahore State could have been held responsible for any of the untoward events of 1848 or 1849 Sir Frederick Currie would have been the first person to be accused, for he had been the virtual head of the State during this period.

Thus whatever political advantages might have been gained by the deposition of Maharaja Duleep Singh, and the annexation of the Punjab by the British Government, this action of Lord Dalhousie was considered unjust and unfair from a moral point of view.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE CONQUERED AND THE CONQUEROR.

On the 21st of February 1849, Raja Sher Singhe, th  
Commander-in-Chief of the rebel forces, played his last  
stake and utterly lost it. Thus ended the battle of  
Gujrat in the defeat of the Khalsa Army, which fled to-  
wards the North-West.

#### Laying down of the arms by the Khalsa.

On the next day i. e. the 22nd of February  
the chase of the flying Sikhs and their Afghan  
allies began, and it was continued with such relentless  
determination that Raja Sher Singh finding his  
troops would not stand behind a river or in a pass, how-  
ever advantageous for defence, resumed his overtures for  
surrender. The terms of surrender being settled, Raja  
Sher Singh and Sirdar Charhat Singh, delivered their  
swords to General Gilbert, by way of submission, on  
the 14th of March 1849, at Rawalpindi. And about  
thirteen or fourteen thousand Sikh soldiers too, with  
forty-one pieces of artillery, surrendered to the Bri-  
tish.

Some of the incidents of this dramatic scene deserve  
notice ; one old grey-bearded soldier, advancing gravely  
to the piles of arms, laid upon it his shield, his sword.

and his matchlock. Then reverantly saluting them, and joining his hands together, he exclaimed, "*Aj Ranjit Singh mar gaya*" (Ranjit Singh died today). Many of the Sikhs betrayed that emotion, when parting with their horses. One of them, who had been obliged to give up his favourite steed, reigned up its head, and fastening the reigns to the peak of his saddle front, addressed the animal in touching terms. He recounted the battles and adventures which they had shared together, and lamented the evil fate which had now befallen them.

He claimed to have been a good and a kind master, and wishing the horse a continuance of such treatment, he salamed it, and bade it good-bye with perfect gravity and sorrowful demeanour.

### **Pursuit of the Afghans.**

The Afghans under Dost Mohammed Khan, now remained to be dealt with, and General Gilbert hurried after them, recovering Attock on the 18th of March, and Peshawar on the 21st, thereby chasing them out of the Punjab through the entrance to the Khybar pass.

The last armed foes having thus been driven from the field, Lord Dalhousie lost no time in applying his sickle to reap the fruit of his victory. On the 30th of March from his camp at Ferozepur, he published to the sound of Royal Salute a proclamation, announcing the final displacement of the Sikh rule by the British Rule throughout the Punjab.

### **Maharaja becomes a Squire.**

As Lord Dalhousie anticipated opposition from Sir Henry Lawrence and the Council of Regency, he had deputed to Lahore, a few days previously, Mr. Henry Muir Elliot (afterwards Sir) the Foreign Secretary to the Governor General as his agent to carry out the final transaction. Having arrived at Lahore on the 28th of March, he at once called upon Sir Henry Lawrence, and showed him the terms offered by Lord Dalhousie to Maharaja Duleep Singh. They were as follows :—

1. "His Highness Maharaja Duleep Singh shall resign for himself, his heir and successors, all rights, titles, and claims to the sovereignty of the Punjab, or to the sovereign power whatever.

2. "All property of the State of whatever description, and wheresoever, shall be confiscated to the Honourable East India Company, in part payment of the whole debt due from the State of Lahore to the British Government, and of the expenses of war.

3. "The gem called the Koh-i-noor, which was taken from Shah Shujah by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, shall be surrendered by the Maharaja of Lahore to the Queen of England.

4. "His Highness Maharaja Duleep Singh shall receive from the Hon'ble East India Company, for the support of himself, his relatives and the servants of the State, a pension not less than four and not exceeding five lakhs of Company's rupees per annum.

5. "His Highness shall be treated with respect and honour. He shall retain the title of Maharaja Duleep Singh Bahadur, and he shall continue to receive, during his life, such portion of the above-named pension as may be allotted to himself personally, provided he shall remain obedient to the British Government, and shall reside at such a place as the Governor-General of India may select."

### **Intimidation of the Councillors**

On reading these terms, Sir Henry Lawrence told Mr. Elliot very plainly, that he was fully convinced that no member of the Council of Regency would sign it, adding at the same time that he being the President of the Council, would not advise them to take such a step. Mr. Elliot thereupon reminded Sir Henry Lawrence that he was going against the wishes of his own Government and that if he was bent upon taking such a course, he should put his decision in writing for submission to the Governor-General. This Sir Henry Lawrence would not do, and seeing no other alternative, he promised to offer no obstacle. Having settled with him, Mr. Elliot sent for Raja Tej Singh, and Raja Dina Nath—Raja Dina Nath politely declined to attend the Conference, but upon urgent intimation he presented himself before the Agent to the Governor-General, when both the Rajas came; Mr. Elliot informed them about Lord Dalhousie's intentions in regard to the Punjab, telling them that, it will be annexed with or without their consent if they acquiesced to His Lordships proposal and signed the conditions offered by him to the young Prince, well and good for them, but in case they demurred, their jagirs would be

forfeited and no consideration, whatever, would be shown to them. Upon hearing this the Rajas went out, discussed the whole matter between them for two or three hours, and there being no alternative left to them, decided to give their consent, and going to Elliot, they put their signatures to the document containing the terms offered to the Maharaja.

### Proclamation Ceremony.

On the next day, the 29th of March, the proclamation ceremony was performed. At 8 a.m., early in the morning, a grand Durbar was held at the palace in the citadel. Mr. Elliot accompanied by the Resident—Sir Henry Lawrence and escorted by a strong body-guard of cavalry, attended the Darbar. The young Maharaja, for the last time, sat upon the throne in the hall of audience, which was packed up with the European and native dignitaries dressed in red and fantastic costumes. Mr. Elliot and his suite took their places among the Council. In perfect silence, the proclamation was read in English, Persian, and Hindustani, and a death like silence followed the announcement. Then Raja Dina Nath with tears in his eyes got up and addressed the Council in very pathetic tone. He said, that the British Government in the case of France, whose revenue was far greater than that of the Punjab, did not take such a step; could it not show the same magnanimity to the Maharaja of this country? At this juncture Mr. Elliot shouted out from behind, "*chup raho, nahi to kale pani bhej diye jaoge*"—('Silence, or you will be transported to the Andemans.')

There upon the Raja sat down at his place, and then the paper containing the terms which had already been signed by the members of the Council of Regency was presented by Raja Tej Singh to the Maharaja who signed it and handed it over to the Agent to the Governor-General. The Darbar was then declared closed and Mr. Elliot departed and as, he left the palace, a royal salute was fired and the British colours were hoisted on the citadel, which proclaimed, to the world at large, that henceforth the Punjab was a British possession, and that the Sikh rule was at an end.

Now before I pass on to narrate the fate of those Chiefs who took up arms against the English, I think it necessary to write a few words concerning the young Prince, who was thus ousted from his throne, and separated from his mother Maharani Jindan Kaur.

### **Duleep Singh.**

Maharaja Duleep Singh was born in 1839, perhaps under the influence of some unlucky star, that he was the victim of so many different calamities throughout his life. In 1844, while hardly six years old, he was called upon to succeed to the throne of the Punjab, vacated by the death of his step-brother Maharaja Sher Singh, and to perform the arduous task of controlling the turbulent sikh soldiery. His mother Maharani Jindan Kaur acted as regent for him. He had been on throne hardly for a year, when on came the first Sikh War, in consequence of which he was deprived of a very rich and prosperous part of his kingdom. Jullandhar Doab, the most fertile tract of the Punjab became the British

territory by the Treaty of Kasur, commonly known as the 'Treaty of Lahore,' and Kashmere was sold out to Maharaja Gulab Singh in lieu of a crore of rupees, and the amount was credited as war indemnity to the British Government. On the 16th of December, a treaty known in history as the Treaty of Bharowal was made with the Maharaja's Government, and by this treaty the British Government took upon itself to "maintain" and "protect" the Lahore State, and became the guardian of the young Maharaja. Thus as a result of the first Sikh War, the Punjab State utterly lost its independence, and became a British Protectorate. For the next two years and three months, the Resident virtually ruled Lahore. Then on the 20th of April 1848 took place that unfortunate incident—The Multan Rebellion. The British Government which had taken upon itself to "maintain" and "protect" the Maharaja's Government, and had become the guardian of the young Prince did not take very strong steps to crush it then and there, inspite of the fact that the British troops were stationed within the Punjab and the Lahore State was paying a subsidy of twenty-two lakhs for this very purpose to the British Government.

On the contrary, the agents of the Resident stationed at different places in the Maharaja's territory, fanned the fire of revolt by maltreating the Sikh Chiefs and thereby goading them to take up arms against the British authorities. Their exertions bore abundant fruit; Sardar Charhat Singh being very harshly treated by Captain Abbott, raised the standard of revolt in Hazara. A month later, his son Raia Sher Singh also threw in

his lot with his father. Thus came about that event, which is generally known as the Second Sikh War. And as a consequence of this the innocent young Prince who was the ward of the the British Government, and who had not raised his little finger against the English, was dethroned on the 29th of March 1849, and his kingdom became a part of the Indian Empire. Thus Maharaja Duleep Singh, before he was eleven years old, lost his crown and his possessions. He was then placed under the charge of Doctor Login, and from the very first it was felt that they do not intend to keep him at Lahore permanently.

Accordingly, at the end of the year, he was removed to Patnagarh, on the Ganges, where he lived till 1854. in which year he went over to England in the company of Doctor Login, and there he was received most graciously by Her Majesty the Queen Victoria, who showed a great kindness to the deported Prince. And here took place that Koh-i-Noor incident which Lady Login tells in a very touching manner : that one day Maharaja was sitting in one of the halls of the Buckingham Palace for his picture which was ordered by the Queen, when suddenly, without any previous information, the Queen entered the hall by some bye-door, holding a beautiful box in her hand, and signed Lady Login, who was standing there, to approach her. On approaching the Queen, she was given that precious jewel—Koh-i-Noor—now greatly changed in its size and shape, to show it to the Prince. The Maharaja on seeing it became very much excited, but with great effort he calmed down his emotions, and approaching the Queen,



he presented the jewel to Her Majesty on his knees, as a token of his submission to the Empress of India.

### **Koh-i-Noor.**

A few words on this matchless jewel will not be free from interest to the reader.

The origin of this most precious stone is lost in the mist of the early legendary antiquity. It had fallen into the hands of the early Turkish invaders of India and from them it passed to the Moghuls. The jewel was given to Hamayun by the weeping mother of Sultan Ibrahim—the last Afghan ruler of Delhi. For two centuries it remained with his descendents, and then the Persian Conqueror Nadir Shah, seeing it glitter in the turban of Muhammad Shah, the then Moghul Emperor of India, exclaimed with rough and somewhat costly humour, 'We will be friends, let us exchange our turbans in pledge of friendship.' And the exchange of course took place. The Afghan conqueror Ahmed Shah, wrested it in his turn from the feeble hands of Nadir Shah's successors, and it came into the possession of Shah Shujah who was later on relieved of the responsibility of keeping so valuable a treasure, by Maharaja Ranjit Singh during his stay at Lahore, as the guest of the Sikh-Ruler.

Ranjit Singh, listening, on his death bed, to the suggestions of a Brahmin, had been half disposed like other death-bed patients, to have peace in the other world by sending the beautiful jewel to adorn the idol of Jagganath. But God willed it otherwise, and the jewel

remained with his descendents. After the annexation, it became the property of the British Government, and was put in charge of the Punjab Board; and the Board committed it to the care of John Lawrence, who half unconsciously thrust it, wrapped in numerous folds of cloth, into his waist coat pocket, the whole thing being contained in an insignificant box, which could be thus easily put away. When he changed his clothes he utterly forgot to remove the precious stone from his pocket. Some time afterwards a message came from Lord Dalhousie, saying that the jewel should be sent to him, as the Queen had ordered it to be sent to her at once. The Subject was mentioned by Sir Henry Lawrence at the Board, when John said quietly, "send for it at once". 'Why you have got it' said S'r Henry; in a moment the whole fact flashed across his mind. He ran towards his private apartments horror stricken and enquired of his servants saying 'have you got a small box which was in my waist-coat pocket sometime ago?' The man replied in the affirmative and produced the little box he wanted. John Lawrence then quickly presented the Koh-i-Nur to the Board, so that it might be forwarded. The Board sent it to Lord Dalhousie who sent it to the Queen together with an account of its adventures.

However, this was merely a digression to tell the reader something about this jewel, let me now come back to the real narrative.

Maharaja by this time had become Christian and married an Egyptian lady of the same faith and decided to settle up in England. He purchased a large tract of

land in the County of Suffolk, where he built a magnificent house for his residence, and henceforth became known there as the Squire of Elvedon.

In 1890 he left England to visit his place of birth. When the Sikhs learnt about this, they almost went mad with joy. Some thirty thousand of them went to Bombay to give the Maharaja an enthusiastic welcome. The Home Government, anticipating trouble, ordered the Maharaja to come back to England. Accordingly he returned to Europe from Aden but these proceedings of the British Government broke the Maharaja's heart.

He instead of going to England went over to France, and there he laid his claims before the Government of that country: but it showed no inclination to take up his cause. Seeing no hope from that quarter, he went over to Russia, and there ended the remaining days of his life. He died, it is believed, in that country in 1895.

### **Maharanee Jindan Kaur.**

Maharanee Jindan Kaur, about whom Major Edwards says, that "she had more wit and daring than any man of her nation", resembled more with Catharine, rather than Elizabeth. For some time she acted as the Regent of the Lahore State on behalf of her son. By the treaty of Bharowal, her name was excluded from the Council of Regency, and she was required to take no part in the affairs of the State. A pension of 12 thousand rupees per mensem was then allotted to her, for her personal and private expenses, and she was allowed to live in peace at Lahore till August 1847, when her company

being considered dangerous for her son by the Resident, she was removed to Sheikhpura, a place some thirty miles from Lahore, silently the Resident adopted an ingenious device. He sent away the young Maharaja to Shalimar Garden, on the pretext to see sights there, in the company of Raja Tej Singh and others, *and was detained there for two days.* In the meanwhile the Maharanee was sent away to Sheikhpura. Thus the son and the mother were separated. In the beginning of May 1848 a plot which was hatched against the Resident and his agents living in the Punjab. It was brought to the notice of Sir Fredrick Currie, the then Resident at Lahore, by a native officer. He took prompt action, arrested 16 men and hanged two of them who were considered to be the ring-leaders. It is said that the Maharanee's name was also implicated in this plot, and in consequence of it she was summarily banished from the Punjab by the orders of the Resident. The Ranee stoutly denied to have anything to do with it, and requested Sir Fredrick Currie to put her upon her defence, but he refused to comply with her request because he was conscious that the legal proof of her delinquency was not obtainable, and if put to a public trial she might escape the punishment. In this way came about her banishment from the Punjab. She was sent away to Benares where she was put under very strict watch, and was deprived of her jewels and other valuables by the order of Lord Dalhousie. Her stipend was then reduced to a thousand rupees a month. Even at Benares she was not allowed to live in peace for many days, and was soon transferred to Chunargarh.

But before many days she managed to escape from that fort, and went over to Nepal. Although she was an unwelcome guest, the Maharaja of Nepal accorded her a very generous treatment. She remained there till 1863, in which year she went away to England to see her son and there she died soon after.

## Mulraj

Mulraj was the originator of all that trouble which ultimately led to the deposition of Maharaja Duleep Singh. He was the eldest son of Dewan Sawan Mal who had been the Nazim of Multan for twenty-three years. Sawan Mal died in 1844, and Mulraj being the eldest son stepped into his shoes and himself became the Nazim of the province. For three years he ruled over the province with moderation and ability and neither the people of Multan, nor the Durbar had any serious complaint against him. In November 1847, he, without any previous notice, and all of a sudden, submitted his resignation to the Resident, who was the virtual head of the Maharaja's Government. The real cause of his resignation is a mystery; anyhow, whether forced by the Resident or of his own free will, he resigned his post of Nazimship. After some delay in April 1848, the Durbar appointed Sirdar Kahn Singh Maan to succeed him, and the British officers selected by Sir Fradrick Currie to accompany the new Nazim to Multan were Mr. P. A. Vans Agnew, of the Civil Service, and Lt. W. A. Anderson of the first Bombay European Fusilliers. The two British officers and Sirdar Kahn Singh Maan were induced by the heat of the season to

take the easiest route by water, while the troops which had to escort them to Multan went by land. The result was that on the 18th of April, the two parties, the troops and their Commander met for the first time before Multan, and encamped in the Idgah, a spacious building, within canon shot of the north face of the fort, and about a mile from Mul Raj's own residence, a garden house outside the fort, called the Amkhas. Mulraj paid two visits to the Idgah, one out of ceremony, and the other out of business. On the 18th of April it was arranged that the Dewan should make over the fort to the new Governor next morning. Early on the morning of the 19th April, the two British officers and Sirdar Kahn Singh Main accompanied Mulraj to the fort of Multan; were shown all over it received the keys; installed two companies of their own Gurkha infantry in possession planted their sentries; mustered the Dewan's garrison, who seemed angry at the prospect of being thrown out of employment, allayed their fears with promises of service, and prepared to return to their residence. The cavalcade passed forth, and entered upon the bridge over the ditch. Two soldiers of Mulraj were standing upon the bridge. One, named Amirchand, struck the nearest with his spear, and knocked him off his horse. Agnew jumped up, and struck his assailant with the riding whip, which he was carrying in his hand; thereupon he threw away his spear and rushing in with his sword, inflicted two wounds. The news of the scuffle was carried in the fort, and in a moment, the whole garrison came pouring forth. Anderson was attacked next, and he was so severely wounded that he fell upon the ground

from his horse; where he was found afterwards by some of his own Gurkha soldiers, who put him on a litter, and carried him to Idgah.

Meanwhile Sirdar Kaban Singh Mean, protected by the presence and assistance of Mul Raj's brother-in-law Rung Ram, had extricated Mr. Agnew from the mob, lifted him on to his own elephant, and hurried away towards the camp binding up Mr. Agnew's as they rode along. At last the two Englishmen were brought to the Idgah. The native doctor of the Gurkha regiment dressed their wounds. This done, Mr. Agnew proceeded to report the occurrence to the Resident at Lahore, and then addressed a letter to Dewan Mulraj, expressing a disbelief in the Dewan's participation in the crime, but calling upon him to justify this opinion by seizing the guilty parties, and coming himself to the Idgah. This was at 11 a. m. At four in the evening one of the Dewan's Chief officers, Raizada Tulsidas brought an answer from Mulraj, briefly stating that it was beyond his power to hand over the guilty or to attend personally upon Mr. Agnew; that he and Rung Ram tried to do so, but were stopped by soldiers, and that Rung Ram was severely wounded for advising the visit, that all the garrison was in rebellion, and that the British officers had better see to their own safety. On the next day, the 20th of April—all the troops of their escort went over to Mulraj; and by the evening excepting Kahn Singh Mean and eight or ten horsemen, the Idgah was vacated by all its former occupants. At night a mob from the city attacked the Idgah, and as there was no one inside the building to offer any serious resistance to the

people, they came in upopposed. One Godhar Singh Mazhbi by name killed Mr. Agnew, and some others hacked Anderson to death with swords. Kahn Singh Mean was taken prisoner, and hurried away to the fort, where he died during the seige. Thus came about the rebellion of Multan which dragged on for nine weary months, and was finally suppressed on the twenty-second of January 1849, on which day Mulraj surrendered unconditionally to General Whish.

On the 21st of January Mul Raj, seeing any further resistance or blood-shed useless, consented to surrender himself unconditionally on the morrow.

Early the next morning—the 22nd January—Mulraj mounted on a well-conditioned Arab splendidly caprisoned, and himself radiant in enamelled armour and gilded silks, he rode to the English camp, and delivered his sword to General Whish, and became the prisoner of the British Government. The Multan rebellion thus came to an end; he was then removed to Lahore, where he was made to pass through a farce of a trial, which was conducted by a special court of which Mr. C.S. Mansel was the President, with Mr. Montgomery and Brigadier Penny for his fellow judges. The trial began on the 31st of May and lasted till 22nd of June, the Court having sat in all for 14 days. Three charges were framed against him by the Court, first for aiding in the murder of Agnew and Anderson; secondly as accessory before the fact, and thirdly as accessory after the fact. He was declared guilty on all the three counts and was sentenced to death;



but Lord Dalhousie changed the death sentence into one of perpetual imprisonment with banishment.

It is claimed by all the English historians that Mulraj was given a very fair trial, and was most justly and fairly treated; it may be so. Some agree with the dictum, but I don't; and my reasons are how can a trial be fair and impartial, in which the prosecutor, the Judge and the complainant be one and the same person--British Government--and moreover in which judgment be given some months before the actual trial took place. Lord Dalhousie on the 5th of February writing\*to a friend of his at home, thus expressed his feelings concerning Mul Raj:-

"I can 't hang him, but I will do what he will think a thousand times worse: I will send him across the sea, what they call the "black waters", and dread it more than death.'

In the face of these facts if any one still claim that Mul Raj was very justly treated, and that he was given a fair trial, he is welcome to hold his opinion. For some time Mul Raj was kept in the Fort of Lahore, and then he was sent to Allahabad where he died, in the Jail, soon after his arrival.

### **Godhar Singh Mazhabi's fate**

Godhar Singh Mazhabi, the murderer of Mr. Agnew was hanged for his guilt on the 15th of March at the very spot where his victim fell at his hands.

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\*Private letters of Marquess of Dalhousie by J G A. Baird, p. 51.

Thus Lord Dalhousie revenged the murder of the two English officers.

### **Raja Sher Singh and Sirdar Charhat Singh.**

Sirdar Charhat Singh and Raja Sher Singh were able to extort from Lord Dalhousie a bit favourable terms for themselves and their colleagues, as they were holding prisoners some British officers and ladies, and the Governor-General was anxious to secure their release. So they were allowed to live at Attari--their home--under certain restrictions. Their movements were restricted to a mile and a half from their residence, and the names of the very few servants allowed to them were all registered. Their landed estate worth seven lakhs was confiscated; and they were granted an allowance of two hundred rupees a month; and were strictly forbidden to correspond with any other Sirdar who had taken part in the rebellion. Even these terms, hard as they are, were granted by Lord Dalhousie under compulsion, as he himself admits in one of his letters, relating to these terms, that "it was the price of recovery" of his countrymen who were prisoners with the Sirdars, and that he "made a sacrifice" but he "was of opinion that the advantages commensurate with the sacrifice were gained". The presence of the Sirdars in the Punjab was a thorn in his side, and he was anxiously waiting for an opportunity which should give him some pretext for their removal from the province. However he could not find any excuse to carry out his purpose till the middle of September; when on the occasion of an eclipse of the moon, Sirdar Charhat Singh and his son Raja Sher Singh took to feed a number of Brahmins, he got his opportunity for

which he had been looking for long. He at once sent orders to the Board to arrest the Sirdars. On the receipt of this letter, John Lawrence wrote a private letter to the Governor-General, telling him that his brother Henry was absent from the Board, and that Mr. Mansel questioned the expediency of so strong a measure. Lord Dalhousie, thereupon immediately replied that the Board must leave it to him to be the judge of the expediency and the public opinion that it was John Lawrence's duty to carry out his orders; but in the meanwhile, before the letter reached the Board, John Lawrence had already arrested the Sirdars. On the 21st of October, 1849 early in the morning, he appeared before Attari with a body of irregular cavalry, and by 11 a.m. Sirdar Charhat Singh, Raja Sher Singh and his brothers were all lodged in the fort at Lahore. After a couple of months they were deported to Allahabad—the destination of all the political prisoners. At the same time Lal Singh and Surat Singh, Hakim Rai and his sons were also apprehended and were treated likewise.

Before closing this chapter it is necessary to say that those who were auxiliary in bringing about this bloody drama to a successful end, were most handsomely paid for their services, by both the Parliament and the Hon'ble the East India Company. Votes of thanks were passed by both the Houses of Parliament, the Court of Directors, and the Court of Proprietors. Lord Dalhousie received a *Marquiset* for his services. Lord Gough was made a *Viscount*. The high honours of *Bath* were awarded to Sir J. Thackwell, and to Sir W. Gilbert, while General Whish, the Chief of the Mulan Forces, received

recognition as a useful General of Division. Herbert B. Edwards, Lake, Taylor, and Lumsden were all made Majors. General Cartland was taken by Lord Dalhousie into the British service on the same pay that he enjoyed in the Sikh Army. The Nawab of Bahawalpur who assisted the British Government with all his Military resources during the rebellion of Multan, received a pension of a lakh of rupees for life from Lord Dalhousie.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE ANNEXATION AND AFTER

The Punjab being annexed; the most eminent question, now, before Lord Dalhousie was to provide it with a most suitable form of administration. Whatever semblance of Government existed in the country under Ranjit Singh had been swept away during seven years of the anarchy that followed his death; and for the last three years the Punjab was being governed by a makeshift arrangement, which was provided for it by the treaty of Bharowal. Now that it became a part of the British India, Lord Dalhousie decided to provide it with a most efficient and suitable administration. The task before him, no doubt, was of a stupendous nature—he had not to modify, or, overhaul an existing institution, but had to construct an entirely new machinery and proved equal to the occasion.

When it was decided that the Punjab was to be annexed, Sir Henry Lawrence tendered his resignation of the Residentsip, because in the first place, he was against the annexation, and secondly, to remove any difficulty that there might be in regard to the appointment of some other officer to the charge of the new province. But Lord Dalhousie was fully aware that Sir Henry's presence in the Punjab for the time being was

indispensable; and until the wounds caused by the so called war had been healed, he dared not to remove the good physician in whom alone the Sikhs had confidence. So in order to secure his services, he persuaded him to withdraw his resignation by appealing to his sense of duty and sentiment.

Thus Sir Henry Lawrence withdrew his resignation. But Lord Dalhousie was at the same time averse to the idea of entrusting the sole charge of the new province into his hands, for reasons of his own.

Under such circumstances he hit upon a novel arrangement, and christened it as the Punjab Board of Administration. It was to consist of three members, namely, Sir Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence, and Charles Greville Mansel. The system was one of divided labour and common responsibility.

Sir Henry Lawrence was to be the President of this, and was to control the political and the military departments. The chief care of John Lawrence was the Civil Administration, and especially the settlement of the land revenue, while the superintendence of the judiciary and police fell to the share of Mansel. Important matters pertaining to any department whatever, each of the three members had his voice, the majority of course prevailing. A Secretary, George Christian, and an Assistant Secretary, Mr. Melvill, were attached to the Board and it was assisted by a body of Commissioners, Deputy Assistant Commissioners, in all fifty-six officers. Of this number 29 were selected from Military and 27 from the Civil Service.

Mr. Robert Montgomery, who replaced Mr. Mansel on the Board in 1850, was one of the Commissioners. The Board was vested with power of life and death; was in itself the highest Court of Appeal, and had full control over the revenue, the excise, and all troops not a part of the regular army.

### **Personnel of the Board.**

In the selection of the members of the Board, Lord Dalhousie displayed a real knowledge of human nature. Of the three members, Sir Henry Lawrence, the President of the triumvirate was a man of great experience in Indian affairs, and especially those of the Punjab. He came to India in 1823, and after serving in the Burmese War went back to England, in order to improve his health, which was shattered on account of a virulent type of fever, that he had contracted during the war. He then returned to India in 1830 after recovering his health, and served the Government in various departments till 1845. At this time he was the Resident at the Court of Nepal, from where he was called to the Punjab, to deal with the Sikhs after the battle of Ferozshahr, and for the next two years he remained in the country as its virtual ruler. Thus he knew the country which he had now to rule as the President of the Board, and was acquainted with its people whose hearts he had won by kind and sympathetic treatment. He was a man of poetic temper, of sentiment, of meteoric energy, and genius. He had rough simplicity of manner, a disregard of form, and a front cordial demeanour; truly loveable, he was not only popular, but was

respected both by the Europeans and the natives. He was quick tempered and over sensitive. He had a wide and deep knowledge of the people of India, sympathy with their hopes, an abiding sense of justice towards them and ardent desire for their welfare. He was generous almost to a fault, and compassionately philanthropic. Indeed he was a glow with enthusiasm of humanity. He had singular power of attaching to him those among whom he lived, and especially those whom he commanded. He was a man of firm determination and strong will. Though his capacity for work was great, he was unsystematic and unmethodical in business. He had great sympathy for the Sikh aristocracy, but could not do anything substantial for them, because John—his brother, and colleague on the Board—and Dalhousie, his master, would not allow him to have his own way on this point.

#### **Mr. John Lawrence.**

The second member of the Board was Mr. John Lawrence, who in 1863 succeeded Lord Elgin, as the Viceroy of India. He too like his brother Sir Henry, had completed his period of apprenticeship before he was employed on his present post. He came to India in 1880; as he was a trained civilian, he was employed in the Revenue Department, and in the capacity of a revenue officer he served the Government of India at various places, e.g. Delhi, Panipat, Gurgaon, and Jullandhar. In 1848 he was temporarily appointed the Resident at Lahore on his brother's departure to England, on sick leave. Thus his knowledge of Sikhs



and their country was only less to his brother but to none else in India. But in other respects, excepting energy and resolution which he possessed in uncommon degree, he was diametrically opposed to his brother. He was "harder" of head, less tender of heart; his theories more convincing to the Western mind, but less appreciated by the oriental; and therefore probably less consummately adopted to the condition of the work, with a boundless capacity for unremitting labour, and genius for details, with great administrative experience, he too, though not revered like his brother, had acquired a great degree of respect with the natives, while the Governor General allowed his opinion a greater weight than he was to accord to those of others—perhaps because they were more often in accord with his own". He had no sympathy for the Sikh aristocracy and was of the opinion that they should be left nothing more than subsistence of life.

**Mr. Charles Grevile Mensal.**

The Board must be composed of more than two members, and the third officer invited to serve on it was Mr. Charles Grevile Mensal. Like John Lawrence he too was a civilian. He was a man of contemplation rather than action—a living hamlet—and it is perhaps well that he was so, because the other two members—John and Henry—were pre-eminently men of action. Mr. Mensal thus served as a foil to them both in quite a different sense from that in which they served as a

\*"The Sikhs of the Sikh Wars" by Gough and Innes, p. 270

fail to each other. He was admirably fitted to discover the weak points in any action which was proposed, and with somewhat irritating impartiality would argue with John in favour of Henry's views, and with Henry in favour of John's. They formed the personnel of the Board, and the study of their character very clearly reveals to the reader that, although the Board did much good work during a short span of its existence, yet it was not harmonious body. It was composed of diverse elements, such as Henry and John, and thus it was self-condemned from its very birth. The seething elements employed in its construction were sure to explode sooner or later. And Sir Charles Napier's remark that "Boards rarely have any talents, and that of the Punjab offered no exception to the rule". This certainly contains some truth in it. However under the existing circumstances no better arrangement could be made for the Punjab, and moreover it was not considered a permanent arrangement, from the very out set, for the newly annexed territory, and Lord Dalhousie dissolved it at the very first opportunity which gave him some pretext for its dissolution.

### **Working of the Board.**

The Board met in the first week of April 1849, and straight-way commenced the work of pacification and improvements. The task before it was, no doubt, of a tremendous nature, but then John and Henry were men who had great capacity for work, and who spared neither themselves nor their subordinates in the performance of duty. Sir Henry Lawrence by nature

a locomotive, the office was not congenial to his health, so in a year, for full four months he was under canvas, riding thirty miles a day and visiting every place of importance. In three years he went round the Punjab twice. On the other hand John was robust in body, and could sit at his desk for fourteen hours a day without injuring his health. In the absence of Sir Henry Lawrence the work at Lahore was carried on by Mr. John Lawrence and Mr. Mansel, but when all the three happened to be present at Lahore, they all at first used to sit in one room, (but later on when the differences between the brothers increased they transferred their offices to different rooms) and the business was despatched in quite an unconventional way. If Henry had any proposal he would take to John and if they agreed upon it, they made Mr. Mansel to agree as well, and the matter was settled once for all then and there; but if they happened to differ, as often was the case; in that case the proposal was placed before Mansel, who would take it home to give his decision on it on the morrow, and then would entirely forget about it, and when asked for his decision the next morning, would answer point blank, that he forget all about the matter, and would thus shift responsibility from his own shoulders. Sometimes when Henry had one plan for the solution of a difficult problem, and John another, and both brought it to him for his opinion, he heard the argument of both the brothers on the two proposals, and after hearing it used to go out into the verandah, in front of the Residency, and walked there up and down for an hour or two, seriously discussing

the whole problem in his mind, and at the end of the discussion would return and say that he differed with Henry on such and such points and with John on such and such and thus ended the whole matter. He was always for talk, while the other two Lawrences were always for action. And a young civilian, who happened to visit Lahore at this time, passed a very funny remark in regard to the working of the Board, that "The Punjab was governed by a firm of three partners who might be characterised as the 'travelling', the 'working' and the 'sleeping' partners."

### John and Henry

In other respects the Board was suitable, but it lacked one essential quality, and that was harmony. The two brothers—Henry and John—set to quarrelling from the very outset of its constitution, and could never make up their differences throughout its existence. And it is no wonder that such was the case, because both were men of firm resolution and different views; thus they were sure to come to a collision sooner or later. The points on which they differed were three: the system of collecting the revenue, the management of the finance, and the treatment of the Jagirdars.

Under the Sikh Government, the revenue was collected sometimes in cash and sometimes in kind; John Lawrence did not like the method of the collection of the revenue in kind, and he introduced the new system, by which it was made essential that the revenue in future should be paid in cash instead of kind. At

first the agricultural classes did not show their dissatisfaction for the new system, but later on when the prices of the agricultural produce fell on account of various causes, and it became difficult for them to market their commodities profitably to obtain money to pay their land-tax, they began to grumble and complain against the new collection, and petitioned the Government to this effect, that they should be allowed in future to pay their land tax in kind. Henry Lawrence gave ear to their requests and tried to persuade John to re-introduce the old method of payment; but John flatly refused to agree to any such proposal; and thus there was a good deal of quarrel over the question between the two brothers. Again, Henry wanted to spend much more on improvements of all sorts and the development of the resources of the newly annexed territory; but even here John was a check upon him and would not allow him to have his own way and thus to bankrupt the treasury.

The crucial point of their differences was the treatment of the Jagirdars. Sir Henry Lawrence entertained very liberal views towards these men: he was of opinion that they should retain their jagirs because they had unquestionable rights to them. But John looked at the question from quite a different angle of vision. He believed that the Jagirdars were a lazy set of men who were wasting the public money to which they had no right, and so he was of opinion that they must not be allowed to retain any thing more than the bare subsistence of life. Henry's answer to his accusation was that if these men did not properly spend

their money, they should be educated, so that they might know the right use of their money, not that they should be deprived of their property which belonged to them by right. Writing to Sir John Kay on this same subject, he remarks that "we have no right to rob a man because he spends his money badly or because he ill-treats his peasantry. We may protect and help the latter without putting their rent into our own pockets."\* This was the chief point which led to the actual friction, and it was sure to increase with the passing of the time, because, as I have said before, they were men of firm determination, and none of them was willing to yield to the other's views. At first when Mensal was serving on the Board, each confided his complaints and wrongs to him, but in 1850 when he was replaced by Mr. Montgomery, the latter then devolved the duty of acting as a 'buffer' between these two 'high pressure engines', along with the other duties of his predecessor. In May 1852, while on tour, Henry wrote to Montgomery a long letter of complaint against John with a request that he would show it to the offender; and John replied on the next day, at greater length, counter-accusing Henry and ending with a similar request. In forwarding John's reply to Henry, Mr. Montgomery gave the latter some wise advice, that he should read it calmly and should not write one in reply; but in spite of his good advice a letter did come from Henry but then he did not show it to John. The relations of the two brothers were very much

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\*Sir Henry Lawrence's life by Innes, p. 142.

strained by this time, and it has become exceedingly difficult for them to work together. At last in December 1852, the crisis came. The Residency at Hyderabad fell vacant, and both of them wrote-almost simultaneously to Lord Dalhousie, requesting him to transfer one or the other of them to the vacant post. Each avowed frankly his own preference for the Punjab, but each expressed his readiness and even anxiety to leave rather than prolong the existing state of things. The two resignations thus being placed together in Lord Dalhousie's hands, it remained for him to make the choice between the two brothers. He had long since made up his mind, that when a convenient opportunity should occur, he would dissolve the Board and substitute for it the rule of a single man; and now that the opportunity had come, he decided that John should henceforth carry on the administration of the country and not Henry. The Hyderabad vacancy had already been filled up by the appointment of Colonel Low, but the Agency to the Governor General in Rajputana was offered to Sir Henry Lawrence instead. He accepted the post offered to him, with a heavy heart and departed for Rajputana in January 1853, amidst the sorrowing fare-wells of friends, European and Natives

They governed the Punjab in all for three years and a few months, and during this period did much good work, which will be described in the next Chapter.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE BOARD AT WORK

#### **Division of the Punjab.**

The Punjab Board, thus constructed, commenced its work of pacification, and improvements, in the country right earnestly from the very outset. The Punjab was divided into seven circles, namely, Cis-Sutlej, Trans-Sutlej, Lahore, Jhelum, Multan, Lia and Derajat, and the tract comprising Peshawar, Kohat, and Hazara valley. The first six named were placed under Commissioners while the Peshawar, Hazara and Kohat tract was in the beginning put under the immediate care of the Board, but was subsequently, when the Board was dissolved, created into a separate Commissionership.

#### **Disbandment and disarmament.**

The first step taken by the Board after this was the disbandment of the late Sikh army. A general muster of the Sikh soldiery, which had remained faithful to the British Government during the rebellion, was held at Lahore; the aged among them were pensioned off, while the more promising were paid off their arrears of pay, and were permitted to re-enter the British service if they so wished. The Sikh army was thus disbanded and disarmed, but the disarming of the people



of the newly annexed territory still remained to be accomplished. Accordingly six weeks after the annexation an edict was issued from Lahore to every town and village between the Beas and the Indus, naming a day for the rendition of weapons, and declaring it forbidden to possess, to sell, or to manufacture arms or munition of war after that date. The execution of this decree was entrusted to the headmen of the rural communities, while in the town, the city police had to enforce it. One hundred and twenty thousand weapons of all sorts and sizes were surrendered voluntarily. The inhabitants of Hazara and Trans-Indus valley were the only exemption to the rule. They were not only allowed, but commanded to retain their arms, for to have disarmed them at this early period, would have been to lay them defenceless prey to their war-like neighbours across the border.

### **Defence of the N. W. F. P.**

The annexation pushed forward the British borders to the Khyber on the North-West, and to the Suleman range on the west. This whole frontier, thus formed, was inhabited by warlike Muslim races, and was subject to incursions from still fiercer tribes dwelling in the adjacent hills. To guard this long-extended frontier, the Board took these precautions : along the entire marches the defensive posts—stretching in zig-zag lines from Dubra in Tonk Estate to Shakwal, 150 miles from Kasmore in Sind—were built, and forts were erected, or repaired ; stores and ammunition for three months were kept deposited in the more important amongst them ;

roads affording easy transit for troops and penetrating the haunts of the robber tribes were opened, and a sufficient force was raised and maintained to hold the frontier unimpaired. This army which was designated as "the Punjab Frontier Force" was composed of ten regiments, of which five were infantry and five cavalry. Attached to it were field batteries served by trained Sikhs, and two companies of sappers, along with Camel and Guide corps. This whole force was placed under the control of the Board. The following abstract from the Punjab Administration Report for the year 1849-50 shows the disposition of the frontier posts:-

Station and District	Infantry Regt.: Men ments	Cavalry Regt.: Men ments	Artillery Guns: Men	Total No. of men
Peshawar	$\frac{1}{2}$ 576	$\frac{1}{2}$ 306	— —	882
Hazara	1 910	— —	6 72	982
Kohat	3 & 2,872 1 Coy. of sappers.	1 584	15 212	3,668
Bannu	1 928	1 584	26 195	1,707
Dera Ismail Khan	1 1,072	1 584	9 83	1,689
Dera Ghazi Khan	1 & 1,016 1 Coy. of sappers	2 1,168	8 116	2,300
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	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ & 7,374	$\frac{1}{2}$ 3,226	64 628	11,228
	2 Coys. of sappers			

## Guide Corps

The 'Guide Corps' was so remarkable a body of men that it is proper here to make some reference to it. It owed its origin to Sir Henry Lawrence, who raised the nucleus of it in 1846. Its original strength was only two hundred men, but after the annexation, its numbers were trebbled. It was composed of natives, chosen for courage, endurance and intelligence whose self-dependence had been tried by a life of solitude and danger. The most cunning trackers the most notorious cattle-lifters, and the most daring robbers from all parts of the Punjab were enrolled in it. These levies were subjected to a wholesome, but not an over-strict discipline, and were clothed in a 'Khakee' uniform so as to be indistinguishable at a short distance from the ground on which they moved. They were given a higher rate of pay; a private of this corps received eight rupees a month and a trooper received twenty-four. But this was all they got by way of pay; they were given no *bhatta* when on active service, and were required to carry their own equipage. Lieutenant Henry Lumsden was the Commandant of this Corps; besides him there were four other European officers and all of them were authorized to act as magistrates too, if need arose.

## Suppression of crime in the Punjab.

The people of the Punjab having been disarmed and the frontier rendered secure, the next object of the Board was to secure the internal peace of the country and the suppression of crime. In order to achieve,

these are two large bodies of police—one preventive with military organization, the other detective with civil organization—were raised from the native population.

### **Police Organization**

The preventive police numbered 8,100 men, of which 5,400 were foot and the rest mounted. It was divided into six regiments and was commanded by native officers, but the superintendence of the whole force was in the hands of four European officers. The infantry furnished guards for treasuries, jails, frontier posts, city gates, escorts for the civil officers and the treasuries in-transit; while the cavalry to be posted in detachments at the civil stations, and the smaller parties were stationed at convenient intervals along the Grand Trunk Road to serve as mounted patrol. The other body i.e. the detective police, numbering 6,900 men, was divided amongst 223 police stations or "thanas", and for their help an important machinery was provided; "Tehsildars" were used for this purpose. Accordingly each "Tehsildar" was invested with police powers within his own jurisdiction; the organization of the police was placed under him, but he was not to interfere in its working. Special arrangements were made for the Peshawar City and its redoubts. This body of police was employed in the detection of crime, in the guarding of ferries and in the collecting of supplies for troops or of boats for the passage of the river. As the result of these judicious measures peace and tranquility prevailed in the province and three years after the annexation, the Board could declare that "in no part of India had there been more

perfect quiet than in the territory lately annexed."

But due to various causes, the crime in the first two years after the annexation had increased in the Punjab to a dangerous degree. The Peshawar valley, in which crime of violence had always been the order of the day, became a nest of assassins. The Doabs, which were covered with brushwood, or jungle, or tracts of long grass, had become the sanctuary of the cattle-lifters and their spoils. To put down the crimes at these various places, the Board adopted most suitable measures. Round the City of Peshawar, they drew a cordon, and behind the cordon police posts were established. They filled in the ravines and hollows and spread a net-work of roads in the adjoining districts. In the Doabs, the roads were cut in different directions, mounted police was sent along them, and more important than all, professional trackers were employed for tracking out the haunts of the cattle-lifters; and thus homicide and cattle-stealing was put down in these districts. But besides cattle-lifting and homicide, the Board had to deal with many more crimes that were prevalent in the country during this period. Dacoity or robbery in gangs which had been bound up with the history of the province rose to an alarming pitch in some districts and especially Amritsar. But strong precaution and wholesome severity soon checked the evil. During the first year thirty seven dacoits were condemned to death in Amritsar alone; in the second year the number fell to seven; and in a few more years the crime ceased to exist throughout the Pnnjab.

### Thuggee.

But there was a more insidious crime—Thuggee—the existence of which seems at first to have been quite unsuspected in this province. The discovery of the corpses by the sides of the wells or in the jungles, after the dacoits had pretty well been exterminated, first roused the suspicion of the Government that other fatalities of death might be found within the Punjab. A young Brahmin Asa Ram was strangled and left for dead upon the Jullunder road, but he recovered and was confronted with his assassins. Thus at last a clue was obtained to the confederacy of the Punjabee Thugs and it was followed up with zeal and energy. The investigation of the crime was entrusted to Mr. Berton, who soon obtained a complete revelation by bargaining with the convicted approvers, that their lives should be spared, if they would make a full disclosure. In this way much proof was collected, many criminals captured, and their general habits ascertained. It was discovered that the crime was only lately introduced in the land of the five rivers, and that the criminals who practised it belonged to an out-cast class of the Sikhs known as *Muzbee*, and were far less dangerous than the *Hindustan Thugs*. They were rude, ferocious, and desperate in their habits. The apprehension of these desperadoes ensured great security in the dissolute localities of high road and caused a decrease of violent crimes in the Punjab.

### Female Infanticide.

A cognate subject and one which would naturally come next to the suppression of dacoity and *thuggee*,

is that of female infanticide, but as its suppression in the Punjab falls during the Chief Commissionership of John Lawrence and not during the administration of the Board, it is unnecessary to dwell upon it here.

### **Construction of Jails in the Punjab**

Under Ranjit Singh and his successors the criminals were dealt with most summarily. The heinous crimes were punished with mutilation, while fine was the only penalty reserved for slight offences. As no one was imprisoned for long periods, the former rulers did not feel the necessity for jails, but with the change of monarchy the barbarous punishment of mutilation was abolished; the death penalty was reserved for only a few grave crimes, while all the rest were atoned with imprisonment of various duration and length. Thus it was felt necessary to build jails for lodging the prisoners. Out of the twenty-five districts under the Board, new jails were proposed and sanctioned for twenty, and for the remaining five it was intended to repair and set in order the buildings already in use for this purpose. These jails were divided into three classes. To the first class, there only belongs one jail, viz, the grand Central Jail at Lahore. It was constructed to contain two thousand prisoners. The second class comprised three provincial jails, situated at Multan, Rawalpindi and Ambala respectively; each of these three could accommodate eight hundred prisoners. The third class jails, twenty one in number, were constructed one at each district station with a capacity to hold 258 convicts. The cost of construction of these jails amounted to five lakhs. With the permission of the Supreme

Government in-door labour was introduced into the Punjab jails and Doctor Charles Hathaway, the Civil Surgeon of Lahore, was appointed by the Board to inspect the jails of the province.

### **Administration of Civil Justice.**

As regards legislation, the native customs were taken as the basis of law; a code of these customs was accordingly drawn up for the information of the European officers. The local knowledge of the Tehsildars, and their acquaintance with the native customs and the Hindu and Muslim codes marked them out as the best Judges of local matters of small importance. The Board, therefore, united the fiscal and judicial functions in the same set of officers, because it was foreseen that it would be beneficial to the landed community and the people at large. These Tahsildars were given the authority to entertain suits up to the value of Rs. 300; but at the same time Civil Courts were also authorised to try all such cases as well.

The procedure of the Law Courts was very much simplified by the Board for the purpose that the people might obtain Justice very cheaply and quickly.

Arbitration was also encouraged by the Board. Accordingly a Code of Rules and Regulations on which the arbitrations were to be based was drawn up by them. In order to carry on the Judicial work efficiently the Board ordered that the Commissioners were to control the Deputy commissioners, and these officials, in their turn, were to keep an eye on their own assistants. The Deputy Commissioners were enjoined to send for



the files of the cases disposed of by the Tehsildars and, without an appeal having been preferred, to scrutinise the decisions. In the same way the young European officers were required to submit to the Commissioners the monthly statements of cases decided by them; and the Commissioners selected out of that list a number of cases for their examination. In this way the Commissioners controlled their subordinates.

### Revenue.

The chief sources of revenue of the Board were land-tax, canal water tax, excise and stamp duties.

Ranjit Singh replenished his exchequer from these sources, especially the first three heads, and the Board had also to look mainly to these items to meet their expenditure.

As Land Tax was the stable source of income, the Board paid special attention towards its proper settlement. Under the Sikh Government it was paid in kind, and was collected by the ill-paid officials, who were apt to take too much from those who did not bribe them, and too little from those who did.

The Board introduced a new system, under which an average of a district was taken on the returns of several years together and then the money value of the Government's share was fixed at an average of current prices.

In the Trans-Indus Division a careful survey of land was made, and a settlement of its revenue for thirty years was concluded. In the Punjab proper

the settlements were effected for short periods, in a few cases for less than three years—but in none for more than ten. The system of cash payment, instead of kind, was introduced, and the duty of the collection of the revenue was entrusted to the “lumbardars” in the “Mahalwari” and to the head-man in the Ryotwari villages. But the Ryotwari system existed to a nominal extent only.

The average income from land revenue under Ranjit Singh amounted to ninety-eight lacs; in the first year following the annexation it stood at ninety eight; but in the third year it reached to one hundred and six lakhs.

### **Excise.**

The Sikh Government taxed forty-eight articles, and the total proceeds of these taxes amounted to sixteen lakhs. Under the Regency the excise duty on twenty seven articles was altogether abolished, while on nine it was reduced. The remissions and reductions cost the treasury a loss of six Lacs. To make up this deficit the Regency adopted three plans. A new duty was introduced and two existing were remodelled. Toll on ferries was introduced, and an extra lac was gained thereby. Excise duty on drugs and spirituous liquors was imposed by a system of licenses, and thus it was made to produce a lac in addition to its former yield.

The Salt Revenue was also reformed. Merchants were required to pay a duty of two rupees on the Punjab

Maunds, at the mouth of the mines; and by this arrangement the income from it was increased by two lacs. Thus out of a total loss of six lacs, four were made good.

After the annexation the Board retained the ferry toll and the spirits duty; imposed a new tax, called the stamp duty, and revised the salt excise duty.

The management of the Cis-Indus salt mines was directly taken up by the Government in its own hands; and it was expected that a net profit of Rs.9,32,925/- will accrue thereby to the State.

By the arrangements mentioned above the Board looked forward to an annual income of sixteen and a quarter lacs from the four taxes; and the following abstracts of receipts clearly show that the revised taxes did yield the expected sum.

*(a) Salt proceeds for the first three years.*

From October 1849 to 30-4-1850	Rs.8,06,852-2-3
From 1-5-1850 to 30-4-1851	15,87,406-1-7
From 1-5-1851 to 30-4-1852	12,81,295-14-10

*b) Excise collection on spirits and drugs during the first two years.*

1849-50	2,78,132-11-4
1850-51	3,02,452-12-7

*(c) Income from stamp duty for the two years ;—*

1849-50	57,395-11-4
1850-51	1,06,482-7-1

(d) *Ferry tolls for the first 2 years:—*

1849-50

62,902-8-10

1850-51

88,878-14-8

### **Jagirs and Pensions.**

It has already been remarked in the previous chapter that the Board was very much divided on the question of Jagirs. Mr. John Lawrence believed that all the jagirdars were a set of lazy fellows, who were wasting the State's revenue, and that they should not be allowed to have anything more than the bare subsistence for life. But Henry's views were just the opposite of his brother's.

He was of the opinion that the jagirdars should be allowed to retain what belonged to them by right, and that the Government was not justified in depriving them of their property simply because they did not make right use of their money.

This was the question on which the brothers never agreed, at least so long as they were both working together on the Board.

However, the new Government made a thorough investigation into the working of the jagir system and the claims of the jagirdars and pension holders. They affirmed the continuance of these grants to the families of the former rulers and State prisoners, to religious objects, while the conditions of the gift were observed in all cases upon the written authority of the Maharajas Ranjit Singh, Kharak Singh and Sher Singh.

In other cases occupants of three generations were confirmed in their title, and with regard to grants for service, the troopers were discharged and impersonal portion of the grants resumed.

To the royal ladies of the Khalsa Court money equivalent as pensions was substituted for landed allotments. A Pensions pay office was established at Lahore under charge of an officer called the Extra Assistant Commissioner; but those payees who lived at a distance were permitted to draw their stipends from their local treasuries.

### Currency.

In dealing with the currency of the Punjab the Board found a matter of no slight difficulty.

Many varieties of coins were found in the country. The Kashmir rupee was the coin in most circulation, and it was worth only ten and a half annas of the Company's rupee; and the best and the most general was the Nanakshahi rupee. It was of a purer metal than the British currency; but of this also not less than thirty varieties were in circulation.

In matters of money transactions all this caused a great confusion; but the Board thought it most essential to restore uniformity in the currency of the country. Accordingly the different currencies in circulation were gradually called in; and coins thus collected from the various districts were sent to Calcutta and Bombay to be melted down, and in their stead

new ones bearing the effigy of the Queen (Victoria) were put into circulation.

### **Public works.**

It needs little thought to appreciate the great needs of the Punjab. Its towns asked for the lines of inter-communications, its rivers for bridges, and its plains to be watered by irrigation.

In order to carry out this programme the Board with the sanction of the Supreme Government constituted a Public works Department under the supervision of Colonel Robert Napier; but before taking up the construction of roads and bridges the Chief Engineer was required to devote his attention to those works that pressed for speedy construction.

On the line of Derajats he had first to erect fortresses for garrisons. Court houses, cantonments, treasuries and jails were also to be established, while conservancy works in big towns and sanitary arrangements at the military cantonments claimed a necessary precedence.

Besides these above mentioned works police posts, serais, and supply depots also called for construction.

The Serais were to have accompanying grounds for troops, and to include a hostlery for the travellers, the Thanas or Police offices, and the Tehsils or the Taxing Offices concentrating all in the same enclosure.

The Camping Grounds were along the main roads. When these works were completed the Board then

undertook to provide the province with a system of good roads, canals and bridges. But these cannot be constructed in a day. So in these matters their work was necessarily one of preparation rather than of completion.

However, in this period, roads were not only projected and surveyed but were actually constructed. In creating the lines of communications the Chief Engineer of the Board had to keep in view three things—(a) the movement of the forces of occupation, (b) the direction of the external commerce, and (c) the channels of the internal traffic. In the Punjab the main commercial line from Lahore to Peshawar was that upon which it was expedient to mass the army of the province. This line passed through Wazirabad, Jhelum, and Rawalpindi, crossing three Doabs and four rivers.

The Engineering difficulties presented were numerous. In the Rachna Doab the Bedh, and Bagh Bucha rivers had to be bridged.

The Indus could be well approached only by precipitating into the stream with blasting an immense mass of its rocky border. Thus the difficulties were very great in the way of the completion of the road; but these obstacles could not deter the Board from their purpose. The whole work was divided into seven sections, and the construction of all was commenced simultaneously, and finished before the abolition of the Board.

Among the purely military roads drawn across the country the one from Lahore to Beas crossing the Baree Doab was first completed. Another from Amritsar to Sialkot passed the Ravi through an open country and met the main line at Wazirabad. Other highways linked Lahore to Multan, Ferozepur and Amritsar by connecting the capital with the Delhi highway.

On the Trans-Indus frontier a road constructed to link the long chain of forts which were built to keep the Derajat; and the rugged highlands between Attock and Kalabagh were also pierced by a line which served to connect the outposts with the northern station. Rawalpindi was opened to Kohat by Koshalghar, and Kohat was also joined to the salt mines at Bahadurkhel, and thence to Bannu by works of high strategical value.

Besides these primary lines of occupation necessary to the Government of the country, two commercial lines were also opened at the same time. One joined Dera Ismail Khan with Lahore by Shahpur and Sheikhpura; the other joined it with Jhang at the Chenab, and thence across the Baree Doab to Abolhar to strike the Delhi highway. Along these highways groves of trees were planted and wells were sunk for the facilities of the travellers. Two other roads which connected Multan to Jhelum and Wazirabad on the one hand and with Bahawalpur on the other were also constructed.

Under the supervision of the local authorities a great many cross roads were laid out nearly in all the Doabs; and before the Board was abolished they had cleared and constructed 1,346 miles of roads, while 853



miles were under construction, 2,487 miles had been traced and 5,272 miles surveyed, exclusive of minor cross and branch roads.

### **Irrigation.**

More had been done by the former rulers for the developement of the Punjab in the way of canals than in that of roads. The Moghuls who were magnificent in all they undertook had especially distinguished themselves in this respect. The Emperor Shah Jehan caused the Husbe Canal to be dug out in 1663. It was cut from the Ravi where it breaks out of the hills and was brought to Lahore, a distance of 110 miles. It was a grand work no doubt; but it did not fertilise the waste. It simply supplied water to the royal gardens, fountains, waterworks, and conservatories at the palace of Lahore. After the treaty of Bharowal a proposal for the enlargement of this canal was made by Sir Henry Lawrence to Lord Hardinge but as it was not entertained favourably by the latter, the scheme was dropped for the time being. After the annexation of the Punjab the same proposal was put by the Board before Lord Dalhousie who sanctioned it.

Accordingly during the winter of 1849-50 scientific investigations were made, and as the result of these investigations it was decided that the Husbe canal should be superseded by a new one with three branches running through the entire length of the Doab. The central line as laid down by Colonel Napier was 247 miles. It was to be cut from the river Ravi at the lowest

of the Himalayan ranges; thence cutting through a high bank it crosses two mountain torrents till it joins the table land. Then it traverses the heart of Majha passing near the towns of Dena Nagar, Batala, and Amritsar, thence striking into the deeps of the wildest wastes of the lower Doab and running past the ruins of the cities rejoins the Ravi, fifty six miles above Multan. At the thirteenth mile not far from Gurdaspur it gives off a branch to fertilize the most arid lands of the Doab, and reaches the city of Kasur. From this branch again a smaller branch is diverted eastwards, and carried on till it meets the Sutlej opposite the battlefield of Sábraon.

At fifty-fifth mile of the grand line another channel branches off to fertilize the country round Lahore.

Adding to the main line of 247 miles, the Kasur, Sabraon and Lahore branches of 84, 61, and 74 miles respectively make up an aggregate of 466 miles.

This canal was completed in 1857 long after the Board was abolished; but still sufficient portion of it was completed during the period of the Board.

In providing the Punjab with a system of good roads and irrigation, the Board did not overlook the subject of comparatively minor importance.

There was want of a system of education in the Province; the want of forest trees, of sanitary measures, and sanatoria. All these subjects demanded and received their due share of attention. A brief abstract

of these activities will be enough to complete the outline of the administration of the Board.

### **Education.**

The work of the first three years in education was chiefly preparatory. The first step was to ascertain what steps had been taken by the natives of the country in this direction. The work was entrusted to Robert Montgomery who threw himself into it with great alacrity. He was surprised to discover that, unlike the other parts of India, the Punjab was full of elementary schools for all classes, Sikhs, Musalmans and Hindus; that even the agricultural class resorted to them in at least as large numbers as the higher castes, and more remarkable still that education of women which was quite unknown at that time in other parts of India was not altogether neglected. In Lahore, for instance, there were sixteen schools for girls with an average of six scholars in each. All these facts showed Mr. Montgomery that there was a general desire for education in the Province.

The standard aimed at in these native schools was not of course high. The staple of the education was the reading and recitation of the sacred volumes accepted by each creed, supplemented by a little writing and arithmetic, and that was considered enough.

The buildings in which these schools were held were of the most primitive kind—a temporary shed or a tent, or the enclosure of some mosque or temple sufficed for the purpose. Sometimes there was nothing but the enveloping shade of a tree. The stipend of the teacher

was precarious and was eked out by parents of the children by presentation of grain or sweetmeats.

The members of the Board were unable at this early date to elaborate any extensive endowments. They proposed to start a central school in every city of the Punjab. A school was actually started in Amritsar and was divided into various sections or departments according to the religions and languages of the students.

By the end of the second year after the annexation, it had 153 students, and at the end of the fourth the number rose to three hundred.

#### **Forests.**

The preservation of the forests was undertaken so far as it could be done in the first place by the issue of orders that all the existing forests should be carefully looked after—secondly, by planting groves of trees round the main lines of the roads.

Thus some shade and timber was secured for the coming generations.

#### **Sanitation and Sanatoria.**

To improve the sanitary condition of Lahore and Amritsar and other cities of the Punjab, proper measures were taken by the Government. The Local Authorities were requested by the Board to carry on the necessary improvements, essential for health—in their respective towns. They were required to widen and pave the streets, to build new bazars, to remove rubbish from the cities and construct drains.

Along with these sanitary measures taken in the plains proceeded the establishment of a sanatorium in the hills for the benefit of military soldiers.

In the Punjab three such stations were founded—one at Murree for the benefit of the British troops, the second one at Badr-ud-din, and the third in the Chamba Hills.

### **Dispensaries.**

Three dispensaries were opened for the benefit of the population at Lahore, Amritsar, and Pind- Dadan- Khan; and recommendations were sent to the Governor General for the establishment of more hospitals in other places in the Province.

### **Finance.**

Before closing this chapter it appears most essential to review the financial condition of the Punjab during this period.

A glance at the balance sheets for these three years convinces the reader that the Punjab proved, as it had been predicted by Lord Dalhousie, a profitable acquisition.

In the first year after the annexation the total revenue of the Government was 134 lakhs, and in the next it rose to 151 lakhs, the third year's revenue being 212 lakhs. The expenditure for these years was 82,87, 149 lakhs respectively.

Thus there was a surplus of 52,67, and 70 lakhs for the first three years.

## EPILOGUE

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, welded a considerable empire during the course of 38 years, extending from Kheyber to Sutlej and Multan to Kashmir. His whole life was spent in conquest. He could not find time to consolidate his acquisitions. Unfortunately his successors did not prove as great as he was. Thus the work of consolidation could not be accomplished. There was only one prince who could do the needful and that was Naunihal Singh, but the cruel hand of destiny snatched him away only a few hours after the demise of his father, Maharaja Kharak Singh. Had he lived a natural life the fate of the Punjab would have been quite different.

The last of the Sikh Rulers, Maharaja Duleep Singh was just a stripling of a child when he was called upon to hold the reins of the turbulent Punjab.

Just after his accession to the gaddi, a war was forced upon him by the Britishers—though most of the historians are of the opinion that the Sikhs were aggressors, but the facts are that the Sikhs did nothing of the like. They only tried to defend their positions, and in doing so they were perfectly right. This fact is brought home to the readers in the first chapter. However the Sikhs faced the inevitable with great courage, and after four pitched battles had to lay down the arms. The victorious British armies moved upto Lahore.

If the Punjab had been annexed then, there would have been no reason for writing this booklet. But Lord Hardinge desisted from annexing the Punjab at that time for the following forceful reasons:—

Firstly, the then Governor General and the Court of Directors were of opinion that the Punjab would never pay for

its administration and for this very reason the Court of Directors were deadly against the annexation of the territory from the very outset.

Secondly, four pitched battles with the Sikhs had reduced the British Army to a very low extent and Lord Hardinge believed that with that reduced army it was not possible to keep a firm hold on the newly acquired territory.

Thirdly, Maharaja Gulab Singh, though a valuable friend, could prove a very formidable enemy at the same time. Hence, to make virtue of a necessity, Lord Hardinge allowed Maharaja Duleep Singh to continue to rule on the shorn territory because the richest portions, the Jullundur Doab, was annexed to the British territory and Kashmir was sold off for a crore of rupees to Maharaja Gulab Singh, the money being pocketed by the Company.

Then some time after, a new treaty, known in history as the treaty of Bharowal, was signed between the durbar and the British Government. By this treaty the Punjab became a British protectorate and Maharaja Duleep Singh a ward of the British Government.

This was the state of affairs when the rising took place at Multan and some time later another rising at Haripur. It was the duty of the British Government to quell these risings. The quelling of these risings did not give any tithe of reason to Lord Dalhousie to annex the Punjab. This question is discussed at full length in the first chapter of the book. There is no denying the fact that a great injustice was done to Maharaja Duleep Singh and indirectly to the Sikh Nation as a whole. Now that after a century's rule of the Punjab, the British Government is quitting this country for good, it behoves them, in my opinion, to hand over the administration of the province to its rightful owners, i. e. the Sikhs. By doing this they will only be righting a century-old wrong.





लाल बहादुर शास्त्री राष्ट्रीय प्रशासन अकादमी, पुस्तकालय

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